(c) and (d) BSNL has not sought any special package for this purpose. BSNL have proposed an expenditure of Rs. 1320 Crores during 2002-2003.

(e) No private company operating in the rural areas of the country has opposed the use of Wireless in Local Loop Technology.

(f) Does not arise in view of (e) above.

Operation of NIC Network

219. SHRI HARENDRA SINGH MALIK: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether NIC Network is operating in the country;

(b) if so, the number of districts covered under the NIC Netwrok;

(c) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to make it operational up to the Block/Tehsil level; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the time-frame fixed by Government for this purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SANJAY PASWAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The number of District Centres (District Collectorates) covered are 585 districts.

(c) and (d) Government had approved a plan to extend NICNET to block level in 487 Block in all the eight North Eastern States including Sikkim as a part of setting up IT based Community Information Centres (CICs) in this region. This project has since been completed by NIC in August, 2002. There is no other sanctioned proposal.

Branch Post Offices at Nandla in H.P.

220. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government had received any proposal in the month of July 2002 regarding opening of Branch Post Office at village Nandla which lies in District Shimla of Himachal Pradesh;

(b) whether it is also a fact that no action has been taken so far although the same was forwarded for appropriate action to the concerned officer; and

(c) whether Government propose to open Branch Post Office at Nandla during the financial year 2002- 2003?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SANJAY PASWAN): (a) Yes, Sir. The representation No. 18/2002 and 15-07-2002 for opening of a Branch Post Office at Village Nandla, District Shimla was received from the Pradhan, Mahila Mandal Nandla Chhouhara Chadgaon, District Shimla.

(b) No, Sir. The Pradhan, Mahila Mandal Nandla Chhouhara Chadgaon, District Shimla was replied by Himachal Pradesh Circle intimating that opening of a Branch Post Office at village Nandla was not justified under the existing norms for opening of Branch Post Offices. As per the norms, the proposed Branch Post Office should not be less than three Kilo Metres away from the nearest existing post office and its percentage of income to cost is required minimum 15% for hilly area. However, in the instant case, the distance of village Nandla from Jangla Post Office is 1.5 Kilo Metres and anticipated percentage of income to cost is 8.51. Thus appropriate action was taken by the concerned officer.

(c) Since the existing norms for opening of Branch Post Offices are not fulfilled, there is no proposal for opening of a Branch Post Office at village Nandla during financial year 2002-2003.

Computer and internet facility

221. PROF. M. M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the States/villages of the country where Government have provided computer and internet facility;

(b) the number of such States/districts/villages of the country where this facility has not yet been extended so far; and

(c) the effective steps being taken by Government for expansion of this facility in all the villages of the country;